THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) The total Thorium Resources identified by the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration & Research, and constituent unit under this Department, are 7.99 Million Tonnes.

(b) These resources are contained in the mineral monazite associated with beach sand placers along the eastern and western coasts of the country as well as in the inland placers of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Jharkhand.

(c) India is pursuing a three stage nuclear power generation programme aimed at long term energy independence based on use of our abundant Thorium resources. The programme is to use Thorium for electricity generation in the long-term. In order to realize this goal, we are well into the first stage based on our modest domestic Uranium resources. This will be followed by second stage comprising of fast reactors which can support a large power generation capacity before getting into the third stage. Thorium in itself can not produce electricity and it has to be first converted to Uranium^{233} in a nuclear reactor. A comprehensive three-stage nuclear power programme is therefore being implemented sequentially.

(d) The third-state system (Thorium reactors) will be deployed after a sizeable second stage capacity is in operation. The nuclear power generation during the year 2005-06 was 17324 million units (MUs) against a target to 15560 MUs. This is based on use of Uranium in the first stage of the three stage Nuclear Power Programme.

(e) Not applicable in view of (c) and (d) above.

Partnership with foreign and Private Companies to increase coal Production

†2107. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign companies have become a necessity in order to increase coa; production in the country now;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the reasons for which Government are not taking the decision for entering into partnership with private sector to increase production in this sector; and

(d) the names of the countries with whose companies talks on bilateral basis have already begun?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) Considering the increasing demand for coal and lignite, Government has liberalized the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) caps to 100% and it is permitted under the automatic route for coal and lignite mining for captive consumption by power projects, iron & steel, cement production and other eligible activities permitted as per the provisions of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973.

(c) The public sector coal companies have been exploring the possibilities of engaging private sector parties for induction of new technologies such as continuous miners, power support longwall etc. on risk/gain sharing basis.

(d) To share information and experience and to explore the possibilities of cooperation in the areas of technology up-gradation, capacity building etc. Joint Working Groups on coal have been setup with France, Germany, Russia, Canada, Australia and China.

Pending Projects with CIL

2108. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the projects completed/lying pending with Coal India Limited and each of its subsidiaries during the current year;

(b) the details of the estimated and projected expenditure of pending and completed projects;

(c) whether projects of Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries are lying pending for the last ten years; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) The details of the projects (each costing Rs. 20 crores and above) completed/likely to be completed are given below:—